

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03

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DRAFTED BY ARA-LA/EP: WSCLARKE:GFH

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ARA - AMB. RYAN

ARA/ECP - JO'MAHONY

ARA/EP - JKING

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY QUITO

INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 007725

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EC, US

SUBJECT: PROPOSED REPLY TO EC-AM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

REF: QUITO 0041

FOR THE AMBASSADOR FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS

1. THE FOLLOWING REPLY TO ECUADOREAN-AMERICAN CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE LETTER OF DECEMBER 22, 1975, MAY BE TRANS-
MITTED TO CHAMBER PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT AT DIS-
CRETION OF POST.

2. BEGIN TEXT: YOUR TELEGRAM OF DECEMBER 22, 1975
TO PRESIDENT FORD RAISES CERTAIN MATTERS OF GREAT CONCERN
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TO THE PRESIDENT AND THIS ADMINISTRATION. BEFORE RESPOND-

ING TO THOSE MATTERS, I WOULD FIRST LIKE TO CONVEY MY CONGRATULATIONS ON THE FOUNDING IN EARLY 1975 OF THE ECUADOREAN-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. YOUR ORGANIZATION SERVES THE HIGHLY IMPORTANT ENDS OF INCREASING TRADE AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES, GOALS SHARED BY US ALL.

IN YOUR MESSAGE TO THE PRESIDENT, YOU NOTE THE CONCERN OF THE ECUADOREAN-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AT THE

UNFAVORABLE EFFECT ON THE RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES OF THE EXCLUSION OF ECUADOR AND VENEZUELA FROM THE BENEFITS OF THE GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES OUTLINED IN THE TRADE ACT OF 1974. EVEN PRIOR TO THE SIGNING OF THE TRADE ACT IN JANUARY 1975, THE ADMINISTRATION RECOGNIZED THE PROBLEMS OF THE RESTRICTIVE CLAUSES OF THAT ACT AND WORKED, WITHOUT SUCCESS, TO FORESTALL THE INCLUSION OF THE OPEC EXCLUSION ARTICLE.

HOWEVER, IN ALL FAIRNESS, IT MUST BE RECOGNIZED THAT IN LEGISLATING THE EXCLUSION OF OPEC COUNTRIES FROM THE BENEFITS OF THE ACT, OUR CONGRESS WAS RESPONDING TO THE PROFOUND CONCERN OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WITH THE RAPID, STEEP AND UNPRECEDENTED INCREASES IN PETROLEUM PRICES DECREED BY THE OPEC ORGANIZATION. INDIGNATION OVER THESE ACTIONS THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES HAS PREVENTED, TO THE PRESENT TIME, AMENDMENTS TO THE DISCRIMINATORY ARTICLES OF THE TRADE ACT.

I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THE ADMINISTRATION CONTINUES TO SUPPORT THE AMENDATORY LEGISLATION INTRODUCED IN CONGRESS WHICH WOULD PROVIDE THE NECESSARY DISCRETIONARY AUTHORITY TO THE PRESIDENT TO WAIVE THE EXCLUSION PROVISIONS OF THE ACT FOR THOSE MEMBERS OF OPEC, INCLUDING ECUADOR, WHICH DID NOT ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN THE 1973-74 OIL EMBARGO AGAINST THE UNITED STATES.

COMPLIMENTARY CLOSE. END TEXT.

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